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SOURCE: Hua-shang Pao.

T'ien-ching Foreign Trade Revived;
Labor Disputes Settled

REVIVAL OF FOREIGN TRADE -- Hua-shang Pao, 11 May 49

During March 1949 the foreign trade of North China showed an export excess of 168,023,134 yuan in People's currency. According to figures issued by the T'ien-ching (Tientsin) Customs Office, March imports were valued at 48,382,045 yuan, the chief items being rope, burlap bags, handicraft tools, automobile parts, leather, zinc oxide, paraffin, paper resin, and rubber. Exports were valued at 216,405,179 yuan, the chief items being rugs, bristles, wool, egg products, hides, casings, medicinal herbs, almonds, melon seeds, vermicelli, wine, and prepared drugs. For April 1949 there was an export excess of 93 million yuan.

One of the economic leaders of T'ien-ching made the following statements concerning North China's foreign trade:

1. North China has recovered rapidly in foreign trade. Amazing recovery has been made in T'ien-ching since the liberation. Under KMT rule, the average monthly foreign trade in 1947 amounted to about US \$2,690,000, by March of this year, it had recovered to US \$880,000.
2. There has been a notable increase of trade between Hong Kong and other parts of North China. In March, Hong Kong sent to T'ien-ching goods valued at 13,469,892 Hong Kong dollars, an increase of more than five times since January. Goods exported to Hong Kong from North China were 62.5 percent more in March than in February. This shows that Hong Kong's trade with North China is better than under the KMT reactionary regime.
3. Imports of foreign goods into North China have fallen off sharply. Under KMT rule foreign goods were forced on North China, but since the liberation the People's Government has exercised great care in selecting goods which can be imported. Luxury goods of no value to the people's economy and unnecessary consumer goods have been forbidden.

- 1 -
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4. Export trade is flourishing because of the free movement of goods between city and country since the liberation of North China. As compared to March exports this year and those of 1947, export trade has recovered more than two thirds.

In the light of these conditions, if the rich exportable resources of North China were exchanged for production tools and necessary raw materials for developing city industries to stabilize the economy, the future of foreign trade in the liberated area would be very bright.

T' IEN-CHING LABOR DISPUTES SETTLED -- Hsu-shang Pao, 4 May 49

It is reported that the labor disputes in private industries of T'ien-ching (Tientsin) have been generally settled through the mediation of the People's Government and the T'ien-ching Office of the North China General Labor Union. During the past 3 months, some 441 cases have been amicably settled, permitting more than 80 percent of the private factories to resume production.

In general the main causes for the disputes arose from action taken by the capitalists. Long influenced by false KMT propaganda which made them suspicious of Communist economic policies, the majority of private factory and shop owners adopted a "wait and see" policy when the city was liberated, and refused to reopen their plants. In addition they attempted to delay wage payments to workers under the pretext of having no ready cash, thereby failing to maintain a living standard for the workers, and delayed improving working conditions in the plants. A minor cause which contributed to some labor disputes was the certain leftist leanings of the workers.

The general policy adopted by the government and union officials in settling labor disputes was to give equal consideration to both management and labor. They urged both parties to observe the rights of the other, and emphasized the need for mutual understanding. By taking this stand, the conciliators have been able to gain the confidence of the employers to have them carry out necessary reforms, while eliminating excessive demands made by the workers.

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- 2 -

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